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NSC BRIEFING

15 January 1958

DAOS

- I. Implementation of the 18 November agreement between the Laotian government and Pathet Lao proceeding without incident, but with Pathet Lao evading full compliance.
  - A. 3,500 Pathet troops will not turn in their arms.
- II. Despite ceremonies marking turnover of authority in Sam Neua and Phong Sally, government control is still only symbolic.
  - A. Pathets have switched from military to political campaign, and movement of 5 Laotian Army battalions into two provinces expected to be unopposed.
- III. Pathet Lao concentrating on campaign for critical 4 May elections to add 20 seats to the present 39 in the national assembly.
- IV. Souvanna Phouma and other conservative leaders are aware of necessity of limiting Pathet electoral gains.
  - A. The leading conservative parties--the Nationalists and Independent have a draft agreement on united front during campaign.
  - B. Nevertheless, Pathets seem to have greater political "know-how" and organization.

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